



North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation

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Beverly Eaves Perdue
Governor

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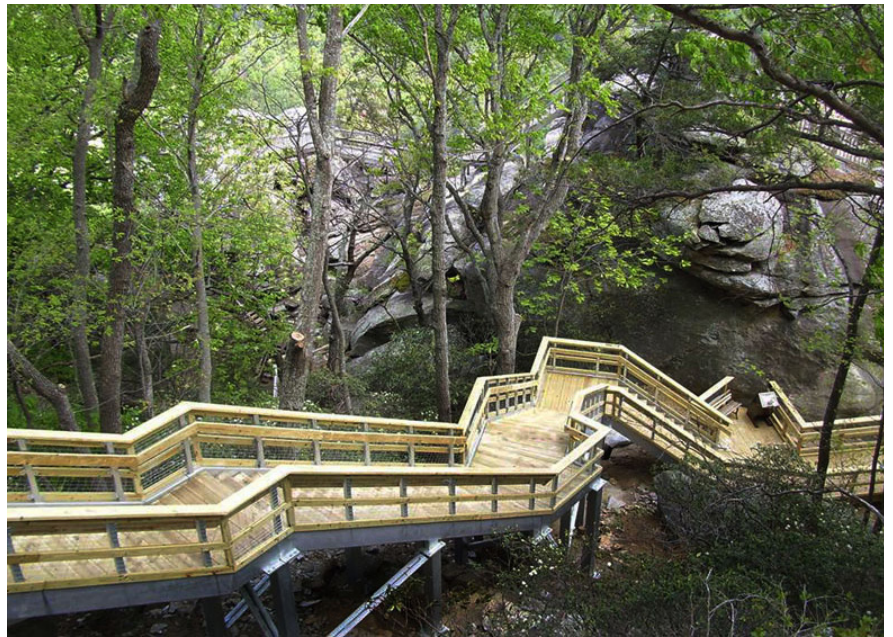
Dee Freeman
Secretary, DENR

CHIMNEY ROCK UPGRADES WELCOME

Infrastructure improvements at Chimney Rock State Park were formally dedicated June 29. They include restoration of the 1940s-era elevator that leads to the park's signature rock spire and the rebuilding of a companion network of stairways.

Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton, who was active in helping acquire the former tourist destination, attended the dedication ceremony, as did a number of local elected officials and members of the business community from Chimney Rock Village and Lake Lure.

A two-year project resulted in complete renovation of the elevator that carries visitors up 26 stories to the park's principal features as well as replacement of the Outcroppings Trail, stairways that also allow



OUTCROPPINGS TRAIL IS NOW A POPULAR ALTERNATE ROUTE TO THE TOP. access to summit destinations.

The projects were completed by contractors supported by state park staff and Chimney Rock Management LLC, the private firm that operates visi-

tor facilities within the Chimney Rock section of the 5,700-acre state park.

"Our commitment upon the purchase of Chimney Rock was continued stewardship of its natural resources and improvement of its facilities for visitor safety and enjoyment, and these projects contribute to that effort," said Lewis Ledford, state parks director.

"Simultaneously since 2007, we've completed other important land acquisitions within the Hickory Nut Gorge and developed a comprehensive master plan for the state park as a whole."

VOLUNTEERS BUILD NEW JORDAN LAKE CANOE LAUNCH

The Carolina Canoe Club and Ranger Michael Annas teamed recently for much-needed improvements to a canoe launch site at Robeson Creek in Jordan Lake State Recreation Area.

The launch site on the Haw River where it empties into Jordan Lake had sustained

severe erosion damage and had become unsightly and unsafe. Annas and his volunteers repositioned the launch at a small stream that joins the river at that spot and installed a floating EZDock launch system.

Paddlers reach the floating dock via a gravel path,

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Department of Environment and Natural Resources

FUNDS FOR CONSERVATION SET ASIDE

LAKE NORMAN – The N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Authority approved funding for key state park land acquisitions at six state park units at its meeting in July at Lake Norman State Park.

The funds, previously identified for other land acquisitions which have been delayed, will go to projects at

Mayo River, New River, William B. Umstead state parks, Mount Jefferson and Yellow Mountain state natural areas and the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail.

The funds will be used to acquire 889 acres for conservation and recreation.

The board also reviewed 2012 local government grant

applications. In this cycle, 60 local units of government have submitted PARTF applications requesting \$12.6 million in PARTF assistance.

The board approved six grants totaling \$1,026,938. Additional grants approved by the board are dependent upon future funding in the first two quarters of fiscal year 2012-13. The Authority awarded grants for 15 projects at the May meeting for a total of \$2.6 million.

State Parks and Recreation Director Lewis Ledford provided an update to the board on the 2012 General Assembly, Land and Water Conservation funding in the recently passed federal transportation legislation, and recently completed capital improvement projects at Chimney Rock State Park and Kerr Lake State Recreation Area.

Ledford also described Chimney Rock State Park's reopening June 29 celebrating completion of a two-year project to renovate the 1940s-era elevator that carries visitors up 26 stories to the park's principal features. The project also included replacement of the Outcroppings Trail, a companion stairway that also allows access to summit destinations.

At Kerr Lake, a boat ramp, parking areas and restroom building have been constructed, along with a new staging area to support fishing tournaments at the Nutbush Bridge area.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Lake Norman State Park Superintendent Casey Rhinehart gave a presentation about the park, its history, natural heritage and recent initiatives.

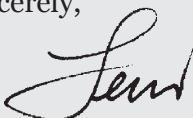
From The Director's Desk

Wherever we go to create a new state park or state natural area or state trail, we make commitments. The most obvious, of course, is conservation. So many of our state parks have been the result of citizen concern that a particular area or landmark become part of the state's conservation lands.

That has certainly been the case at Chimney Rock State Park, which we consider one of North Carolina's marquee natural attractions. But, there was also a commitment at the time of the purchase to continue operating the Chimney Rock area of the larger state park (that was formerly a private nature park) without interruption. It has long been one of the linchpins of the tourism-based economy of the community. Any interruption in its operations would've had serious economic impact. With the partnership of Chimney Rock Management Inc., the state parks system has been able to meet that commitment. It was also necessary to commit effort and funds to upgrade the infrastructure of this venerable attraction. With the formal dedication of those improvements this summer, it's assured our commitment to the economic health of the region will continue to be met. We have an ambitious master plan for the state park that now encompasses more than 5,000 acres, that will lead to exciting, high-profile projects in the future.

Another example is at Carolina Beach State Park. The newly renovated marina there recently earned a "Clean Marina" designation that reflects sound environmental practices in handling thousands of boats each year in a sensitive coastal environment. Along with obvious improvements that visitors notice, the renovation project also included the removal of aging, underground fuel tanks and a redesign of paved areas that prevents stormwater runoff from getting into coastal waters. Every time we build or alter a facility, we have a commitment to protect the natural resources to the fullest extent possible.

Sincerely,



Lewis Ledford



AT LEFT, A FAMILY GETS READY TO LAUNCH A SHORT TUBING RIDE PAST THE STATE PARK. ABOVE, KIDS HUNT RUBBER SALAMANDERS IN PLASTIC POOLS.



CELEBRATING 31 YEARS AT NEW RIVER

Just as she courses through the mountains of Ashe and Alleghany counties, the New River winds through the souls of the people who live near her and the sensibilities of those who visit her.

Local poet Marti Medley, who was raised next to the ancient river, put it this way: “Listen, she says, to the whisper of days and nights and years; be witness to the celebrations and sorrows of uncounted generations; keeper of thoughts and words, profane, joyous and profound...”

New River State Park, its neighbors, and folks who just love the river joined July 28 in the 31st New River Celebration. Thirty-one years is just a heartbeat for a river that’s one of the oldest on the continent.

Inspiration for the celebration came from an event in May 1980 when the first, modest state park facilities were dedicated at the Wagoner Access, said Jay Wild, the park’s longtime superintendent. A canoe race and a bit of bluegrass music enlivened the dedication. The following year, many of the same folks came back to start a tradition.

In its earliest days, the celebration was largely an environmental pep rally. “People were just celebrating winning the battle,” Wild said.

That battle was a bare-knuckled struggle to keep the New River from being dammed for hydropower. In 1976, a 26.5-mile segment was designated a national Wild and Scenic River, which essentially stymied the dam project and birthed the state park.

The New River Celebration has evolved. It has a mascot now -- Snotty the snot otter, a

costumed representation of the rare hellbender salamander – and it has a menu of activities for adults and kids. And, it offers a great excuse to eat a good hot dog in the shade.

But the tubing, the games, the poetry contest, the t-shirts, the environmental parade and all the rest are just ways that people try to express deep feelings about this stunning natural resource.



RANGER PAUL BAILEY LEADS HUNT FOR CRITTERS.



TUBING AT THE STATE PARK WAS A POPULAR ACTIVITY.

BIOLOGISTS SEARCH ISLAND IN THE SKY

A tenacious little plant with a bright yellow blossom may be one of many canaries in the coal mine of climate change. And it was the subject of a determined search in July on the misty cliff faces of Grandfather Mountain and Elk Knob.

The spreading avens (*Geum radiatum*) has clung to mountain rocks since before the last ice age but may be disappearing. There are thought to be fewer than a dozen populations left in the world, and it's one of those endangered species you hear so much about.

That's why biologists from the state parks system, the National Parks Service and other agencies hunted the plant at the two state parks and on adjacent property of the Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation last week.

The two-day search resembled one for a lost hiker, with scientists rappelling over cliff edges and scrambling through heavy brush on steep slopes to map and measure plots of the plant and examine evidence of flowering and seeds.

Spreading avens is among a tribe of plants that live in rare biospheres at high

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SPREADING AVENS HAS A BRIGHT YELLOW BLOSSOM IN SUMMER.



ABOVE, BIOLOGISTS RAPPEL DOWN GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN CLIFF TO MEASURE SMALL PLOTS OF THE SPREADING AVENS. BELOW, TEAM MEMBERS RECORD OBSERVATIONS SHOUTED FROM THE CLIFF FACES.



FRIENDS PROMOTE OUTDOOR LEARNING

By Dorothy Graham
Friends of State Parks

A partnership among three state park-focused organizations, all committed to engaging inner-city young people in outdoor learning, saw new life in April when 78 fifth graders from Lake-wood Elementary School in Durham visited Eno River State Park.

The students came in groups of 25 over three days and with environmental educators at the helm, had opportunities to wade in the river and find water bugs, listen to river currents and bird sounds, learn about river management and stewardship and enjoy optimal motion from the swinging bridge.

Park Superintendent Keith Neelson, rangers Amy Duggins and Christopher Greiner, park technician Jeremy Lappas and Liz Stabenow, environmental educator for Eno River Association, applied their collective wisdom and years of environmental education experience to capture and hold the students' attention and instill in their young minds a growing love for nature and

being outdoors.

North Carolina Friends of State Parks (NCFSP), an all-volunteer membership organization that works closely with the state parks system and supports its mission, assisted in planning and coordinating the field trips with the schoolteachers and principal.

NCFSP provided funds for school bus transportation to bring the students to the state park and group co-leaders – Mary Fletcher, Ben Wright, Alison O'Reilly, Bob Sowa and Dorothy Graham. Costco provided funds to pay for healthy snacks.

As a statewide organization, NCFSP will be encouraging state parks friends groups to form similar partnerships with local schools and state parks to take young people who might otherwise not have the experience on an all-day field trip to their state parks.

Environmental education is what our park rangers love to do and do so well. There are many ways they can use support in reaching underserved youth.

SPREADING AVENS

Appalachian altitudes, often described by science writers as biological islands in the mountain landscape.

Assuming the planet is indeed warming, these islands may grow smaller or disappear altogether as an ocean of warmer temperatures gradually rises up the slopes.

So far, the known spreading avens populations in the state parks and elsewhere seem to be holding their own but there's not much evidence they're "spreading" as their common name implies, according to Chris Ulrey of the National Park Service.

The difficulty of this survey was enough to prompt several agencies to combine forces, said Marshall Ellis, a state parks system biologist. Results are sent to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the official keeper of the books on endangered species, he said. "It's also an effort to use the same protocol and methods so we're all counting oranges and not oranges and apples."

Frequently, one of the reasons for creating a state park is the notion that a site is a haven for rare species. The biologists with the state parks system and their colleagues are the ones that must make the case for those claims.

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STATE PARKS BIOLOGIST MARSHALL ELLIS MEASURES.



TEAM MEMBERS PREPARE TO RAPPEL OVER LIP OF CLIFF.

MOUNTAINS/SEA TRAIL GAINS 23 MILES

A 23-mile stretch of new footpath at Falls Lake State Recreation Area was officially designated as part of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail May 19. It connects to trail built earlier to offer an uninterrupted 60-mile hiking experience skirting the lake.

The centerpiece of this latest addition to the 1,000-mile MST is a 100-foot steel bridge over Little Lick Creek.

“Something of this magnitude cannot be accomplished without all of these partners working together,” said Chris Dawes of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission at a dedication ceremony arranged by the Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail.

Representatives of the state parks system, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Durham County participated as partners.

The trail segment represents more than 22,500 hours of volunteer labor contributed by the friends group. The value of this labor was conservatively estimated at \$623,000.

Task force leaders gathered crews to build mini-segments of two or three miles at a time and those task force groups will continue to main-



CELEBRANTS SNIP A CEREMONIAL RIBBON OPENING THE 23-MILE SEGMENT. the site.

Lewis Ledford, state parks director, said that the state has committed about \$8 million to the trail in the past several years through the N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund.

In addition, the state's Recreational Trails Program, administered by the Division of Parks and Recreation provided a grant – matched with funds from Durham County – that provided \$205,611 for the bridge and accompanying ramps and boardwalks.

Once all was in place, volunteers installed native plants at bridge approaches to stabilize the banks and beautify

Roughly half of the 1,000-mile corridor of the MST offers dedicated trail, with the remainder routed along public roads and rights-of-way. The friends group task forces continue to work on extending the trail, currently concentrating in the northwest mountains and from Falls Lake eastward toward Johnston County.

The trail was conceived in 1977 by Howard Lee, secretary of what is now the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Ledford took the occasion to present special certificates of appreciation to several of the partners in the effort, including Brewer and the friends group, Tom Freeman of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Wildlife Resources Commission and Durham County.

The state parks system also gave special recognition to the Triangle Greenways Council, represented by its president Bill Flournoy, who began construction of the Falls Lake south shore trail in the early 1980s, with the hope that it would eventually become part of the MST.



A STEEL BRIDGE OVER LITTLE LICK CREEK WAS A NECESSITY.



ABOVE, DIANE VAN DEREN PAUSES AT THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT MITCHELL IN THE EARLY STAGES OF HER RECORD-SETTING TRAVERSE OF THE MOUNTAINS-TO-SEA STATE TRAIL. AT RIGHT, SHE CELEBRATES ATOP THE DUNE OF JOCKEY'S RIDGE STATE PARK, THE TRAIL'S EASTERN TERMINUS.



ENDURANCE RUNNER SETS MST RECORD

The 29th person to complete the 1,000-mile Mountains-to-Sea State Trail will be the one to remember for quite some time.

Endurance athlete Diane Van Deren topped the dune at Jockey's Ridge State Park on June 2, completing a record-breaking traverse of the trail in 22 days, 5 hours and 3 minutes, roughly two days faster than the previous best time set in 2011.

Van Deren, 52, endured mountain fogs, slippery footpaths and climactic Tropical Storm Beryl with 40 mph winds and drenching rains near the final push. She ran or jogged as many as 72 miles a day, occasionally logging 22-hour sessions on the trail.

"I haven't absorbed it yet," Van Deren told the *Virginian Pilot*. "It's like a big vacation."

Van Deren tackled the record with the help of sponsors The North Face, a clothing and gear maker, and North Carolina-based Great Outdoor Provision Co. with the intention of raising \$40,000 for the trail. She was supported by volunteers and Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail who helped arrange logistics and 16 guides who ran segments with her.

Kate Dixon, executive director of the friends group, said, "Diane is an extraordinary athlete and the weather conditions she faced were unusually difficult. But she, like the other 28 people who have completed the trail before her, experienced

moments – grand and small – when the beauty of North Carolina took her breath away"

It's significant that the MST, a unit of the state parks system, is attracting nationally known athletes and a series of record attempts alongside other famous paths such as the Appalachian Trail and the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail.

"When I talk to people like Diane who have completed the entire trail, I feel that the MST represents all that is good about North Carolina – its natural beauty and its generous people," said Dixon.

Van Deren of Colorado has competed in the 100-mile Hardrock Endurance Run in the Colorado Rockies, and in 2008, won the Yukon Arctic Ultra, a 300-mile winter race, pulling a 50-pound sled with food and supplies.

Once prone to epileptic seizures, Van Deren underwent surgery in 1997 to remove brain tissue from her front temporal lobe, a procedure that relieved the seizures but left her with short-term memory losses and impairs her ability to read maps and navigate.

The actual mileage covered in her run from Clingman's Dome to Jockey's Ridge was 935 miles.

About half the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail is on dedicated footpath with the remainder routed along rural roads as volunteers continue to build trail segments.

CHIMNEY ROCK

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The dedication marked the end of a long-term effort to improve infrastructure at Chimney Rock, the centerpiece of the state park, which had been a private tourist destination before it was incorporated into the state park in 2007. The Morse family developed the popular attraction beginning in 1902.

Since 2007, the state parks system has invested \$5.1 million in renovations at Chimney Rock, most of it provided through the N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, the principal funding source for state parks capital projects and land acquisition.

To furnish elevator service to the mountain's summit in 1949, workmen labored for 18 months to blast through solid granite, creating a 258-foot elevator shaft reached through a 198-foot-long tunnel.

The Sky Lounge entrance facility at the top was then built as a gateway to the Chimney Rock feature and upper-level trails.

The elevator renovation project repaired or replaced almost every part including the original elevator car and an emergency evacuation stair system.

The Outcroppings Trail, a series of 491 stairs that rises 260 feet in elevation, was reopened to the public in April, replacing a network of wooden stairways gradually created in the first half of the last century.

That project involved four helicopter airlift missions to transport construction materials. Steel columns were carefully lowered between rock outcroppings and large trees



LT. GOV. WALTER DALTON, SECOND FROM RIGHT, CUTS THE RIBBON ON NEW ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS WITH HELP FROM REP. MIKE HAGER OF RUTHERFORDTON, RIGHT, LEWIS LEDFORD, STATE PARKS DIRECTOR, LEFT, CLARK POOLE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE RUTHERFORD COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, SECOND FROM LEFT, AND AN UNIDENTIFIED YOUNG PARK VISITOR.

onto new concrete footings.

The improvements have also included replacement of water-supply tanks on the mountain's summit, structural repairs and repaving of the

park's entrance bridge, modifications to the Sky Lounge and renovation of restrooms at two sites, making them fully accessible and adding sustainable, water-saving features.



A FISH CALLED 'LUNA'

THIS FISH WAS PAINTED FOR MEDOC MOUNTAIN STATE PARK BY LOCAL ARTIST TRACI WATSON WITH A BODY THE COLOR OF LUNA MOTH WINGS AND FINS PAINTED LIKE THE WINGS OF VARIOUS BUTTERFLIES. HER MOUTH HOLDS A CATERPILLAR. SHE'S NOW DISPLAYED AT THE PARK'S VISITOR CENTER.

CAROLINA BEACH BOASTS 'CLEAN MARINA'

The marina at Carolina Beach State Park is one of three designated this year as a North Carolina Clean Marina by the N.C. Division of Coastal Management.

The N.C. Clean Marina program illustrates how marina operators can help safeguard the environment by using management and operation techniques that exceed environmental requirements.

To earn certification, marina operators prepare spill prevention plans and conduct safety and emergency planning. They must also control boat maintenance activities to protect water quality.

Marinas must complete the reporting process every two years to retain the certification. Such marinas are eligible to fly the Clean Marina flag and use the logo in advertising. The flags signal to boaters that a marina cares about the cleanliness of area waterways.

In 2010, the Carolina Beach marina completed a large-scale renovation, which included expanding from 42 to 54 slips, enlarging the parking area and dredging the marina basin.



THE STATE PARK'S MARINA WAS ENLARGED IN 2010.

The \$3.3 million project also involved replacing aging underground fuel storage tanks with free-standing tanks and eliminating all direct stormwater discharge from the parking areas into marina waters.

CANOE LAUNCH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a small wooden platform and a ramp so that the stream's shoreline remains undisturbed.

To begin the project, the volunteers spread new gravel and redirected the path to the stream. More than 30 tons of crush-and-run, riprap and boulders were used in the project to build the walking path, rebuild the stream bank and reinforce the ditches to slow the water runoff from a parking area.

The team then assembled the new dock system and placed it in the stream, built an abutment and installed the dock.

At the old launch site, boulders were placed in the Haw River at the bank's edge to stabilize fill dirt and to keep river current from eroding the bank. More fill dirt was then added to bring the grade of the bank as close to the original state as possible.

Finally, the team added topsoil and planted a variety of wetland trees and grass to restore the area.

More than 110 volunteer hours were contributed by club members, and Annas fulfilled an action partnership requirement for his environmental education certification.

A number of division and park staff mem-



VOLUNTEERS RECLAIMED THE SHORELINE WITH NATIVE PLANTS AND LARGE STONES AT THE OLD LAUNCH.

bers also assisted on the project, including Pete Mitchel, Bob Brueckner, Amin Davis, Emily Hill, Butch Butler, Tim Bash and Brock Martin.

The improvements have been well received by canoeists and kayakers, and use of the area has been brisk this season.

YOUNG NATURALISTS STALK NIGHTJARS

By Sean Higgins
Interpretation & Education
Manager

Nightjars, including whip-poor-wills, chuck-will's widows and common night-hawks, are some of our most bizarre and mysterious birds. Few ever get an up-close glimpse of these feathered anomalies.

A group of teen naturalists went in search of the birds at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area in June in a citizen science effort of the Wake Audubon Young Naturalist Club.

The birds have cat-like whiskers, gaping mouths like bullfrogs with beaks and bulging owl-like eyes.

Most often they are heard calling their names on warm summer nights. In fact, whip-poor-will and chuck-will's-widow are onomatopoeia referencing their far-reaching calls.

Adding to the nightjar family mystique – they build no nest but lay eggs directly on the forest floor. They primarily hunt insects by the light of the moon, and they were formerly known as “goatsuckers” due to a wild misconception concerning their feeding preferences.

Nocturnal habits, long migrations and cryptic color make it difficult for biologists to fully understand their habitats and populations.

Ten young naturalists helped by joining a nationwide citizen science survey through the Center for Conservation Biology. This required a nature convoy by moonlight on one very hot summer night.

We rendezvoused at 11:30 p.m. at an ice cream stand in Apex for a briefing on the



SECRETIVE AND DIFFICULT TO SPOT, NIGHTJARS SPORT CAT-LIKE WHISKERS, GAPING MOUTHS LIKE BULLFROGS AND BULGING OWL-LIKE EYES.

scientific protocol while enjoying ice cream and dill pickle-flavored snow cones. From there, we drove along the east side of Jordan Lake in Chatham County.

We stopped every mile to listen for the cooing calls of nightjars. A chorus of katydids, green frogs and eastern spadefoot toads filled the humid air – but no nightjars.

At times, we wondered if we heard whip-poor-wills deep in the distance, but then dismissed it as our ears playing tricks. At one stop, we thought we spooked a gaggle of geese, only to discover young adults enjoying a nighttime swim.

For our final survey stop, we pulled onto a gravel drive between two straw fields flanked by forest. We listened intently in all directions for a full six minutes as the protocol required.

Alas, we'd been shut out. As we gathered for a final debriefing, I tried to minimize the group's disappointment.

“Our result of no birds

is just as important to the conservation study as if we'd heard a dozen,” I said reassuringly. “Remember that it's the combined data in all 48 states over several decades that allows scientists to...”

“Chuck-will's-widow... chuck-will's-widow...chuck-will's-widow,” echoed through the air.

“Did you hear that?” one young naturalist shouted. “There's a second one over there,” shouted another. “Can we count them in the study?”

I explained that we could not count these latecomers in our official results, but could make a side note of their late appearance.

It was a fitting end to an unusual evening, perhaps a commentary on the shadowy nature of nightjars.

Wake Audubon's Young Naturalist Club for teens 12-18, their families and volunteers, join for monthly wildlife excursions and service projects across the state. Learn more at www.wakeaudubon.org.

NATIONAL WORKDAY BOOSTS PARK TRAILS

Fourteen state parks held special activities on National Trails Day June 2 ranging from intensive trail-building workdays to relaxed plant identification hikes.

The national event always scheduled for the first Saturday in June drew people from all over the country onto trails to work or hike, and the event introduced families to new outdoor experiences on some of the nation's 200,000 miles of trail.

The American Hiking Society prepared a national database where parks systems and outdoor groups could post events.

In the Triangle area, more than 100 volunteers showed up to work on segments of the Mountains-to-Sea State Trail at both Eno River State Park and Falls Lake State Recreation Area.

They trimmed overgrown foliage, removed fallen logs, installed signs, repaired water bars and cleared new footpath.

Volunteers also worked on existing park trails at Lake James, Crowders Mountain and Grandfather Mountain state parks.

New River State Park opened a new 1.5-mile segment called the River Run Trail just before National Trails Day, and Mount Jefferson State Natural Area designated one of its footpaths as a "Track Trail," one of a national network of interpretive trails designed for family adventures.

In another event that appealed especially to families, Raven Rock State Park staged a brief hike and afterward, distributed drawing supplies with hikers asked to express in art what makes the outdoors "Naturally Wonderful."

At Lake James State Park, a friends group partnered with the Overmountain Victory Trails Association to help clear a corridor for a new segment of that regional historic trail.



A CREW INSTALLS NEW DIRECTIONAL SIGNS AT A TRAIL INTERSECTION AT ENO RIVER STATE PARK



PLENTY OF TOOLS WERE PROVIDED FOR VOLUNTEERS.



NEW BRIDGE AT RAVEN ROCK

MAINTENANCE MECHANICS FROM BOTH RAVEN ROCK AND CARVERS CREEK STATE PARKS FABRICATED THIS NEW BRIDGE ACROSS LITTLE CREEK THIS SUMMER ON THE TRAIL SERVING THE GROUP CAMPGROUND.

VOLUNTEERS GET GOVERNOR'S AWARDS

Volunteers who helped create the Summit Trail at Elk Knob State Park were recently recognized by both the park's advisory committee and by the governor's office, which presented two Governor's Awards for Volunteer Service.

The 1.8-mile trail to the second-highest peak in Watauga County demanded more than 6,000 hours of labor over five and a half years. Much of the work was done on Saturdays during good weather.

The volunteers, directed by Superintendent Larry Trivette and park staff, saved the state parks system at least \$425,000, based on a common estimate of \$45 per linear foot for trail construction in mountain terrain.

Tom Layton was presented an Individual Award from the governor's office for volunteering several hundred hours.

The application stated that Layton "committed himself



FLANKED BY RANGER KELLY SAFLEY AND SUPT. LARRY TRIVETTE, THE VOLUNTEERS HONORED ARE, LEFT TO RIGHT, KIM MITCHELL, TOM LAYTON, DR. ERIC FRAUMAN, JAMES LAUTZENHEISER.

to showing up at our park, rain or shine, almost every Saturday to perform backbreaking work," digging tread, moving large rocks and spreading gravel. Layton occasionally contributed vacation days from his job.

Kim Mitchell was given a Senior Volunteer award, an avid hiker, Mitchell was a leader, often among much younger

workers, Trivette said he was devoted to the trail project to its completion.

A trail crew from Appalachian State University was also recognized. The crew recruited fellow students from the school, providing some welcome manpower to dig waterbars, create bucket brigades and do some heavy lifting.

HIKERS TREATED TO PARK AFTER DARK

A handful of intrepid hikers was treated to a view about a week ago that few people have seen in decades. It was a nighttime panorama of the New River valley, surrounding peaks and the modest lights of small towns from the summit of Mount Jefferson.

The night hike began just as Mount Jefferson State Natural Area was closing for the day. Hikers and their vehicles were carefully counted and escorted to the summit parking lot for the outing led by Ranger Tom Randolph. It was a leisurely two miles round trip, and timed for the group



RANGER TOM RANDOLPH LEADS SUNDOWN PROGRAM AT LUTHER ROCK. to reach lofty Luther Rock just after sundown. It gave a radically different perspective of the mountain that became part of the state parks system in 1956.

Mount Jefferson is pretty much a "free-standing"

mountain, its 4,683-foot peak abruptly rising alone more than 1,600 feet above the surrounding mountain landscape. This allows for some spectacular views that are all the more dramatic after sunset.

CONOLLY TO LEAD CARVERS CREEK

Jane Conolly, a veteran state park ranger, has been promoted to superintendent of Carvers Creek State Park in Cumberland County. She succeeds Janet Pearson, who accepted a position as superintendent at Stone Mountain State Park earlier this year.

A superintendent is the chief of operations and administration at a state park or state recreation area with wide-ranging responsibilities for staffing, training, law enforcement, visitor services, natural resource protection and environmental education.

Conolly is a native of Athens, Ga. And a 1982 graduate of the University of Georgia with a bachelor's degree in parks and recreation management, and she worked with Georgia State Parks while in college.



She joined the North Carolina state parks system in 1997 as a ranger at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area and transferred to Gorges State Park in 2003. After working with local and state parks systems in Georgia in 2008-09, she returned to the division as a ranger at Crowders Mountain State Park.

She holds certifications in environmental education and advanced law enforcement and volunteers as a peer support counselor.

"Jane has deep experience in all phases of park operations as well as a keen sense of our mission, and that will be invaluable as we prepare to open Carvers Creek State Park with interim facilities later this year. Development of this new park will be an exciting and challenging experience both for Jane and the state parks system," said Lewis Ledford, state parks director.

Carvers Creek State Park was authorized by the N.C. General Assembly in 2005, and currently encompasses 4,076 acres.

PARK RANGER WADE STUBBS RETIRES



STATE PARK RANGER WADE STUBBS RETIRED IN JUNE, ENDING A 30-YEAR CAREER WITH THE N.C. DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION. STUBBS, A NATIVE OF SHELBY, GRADUATED IN 1980 FROM NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY WITH A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN RECREATION RESOURCE ADMINISTRATION. HE WAS A SEASONAL EMPLOYEE AT MOUNT MITCHELL STATE PARK BEFORE JOINING THE DIVISION FULLTIME IN 1982 AS A RANGER AT MORROW MOUNTAIN STATE PARK. HE JOINED THE STAFF AT SOUTH MOUNTAINS STATE PARK IN 2001. ABOVE, STUBBS, LEFT, RECEIVES HIS RETIREMENT CERTIFICATE FROM MIKE LAMBERT, CHIEF OF OPERATIONS.

RIGHT, STUBBS WITH WIFE SONYA AND DAUGHTER CHRISTA.



CANOES SHARE *BLACKBEARD'S* BERTH

Two ancient American Indian dugout canoes wrested from Lake Phelps at Pettigrew State Park are sharing space with the cannon and trinkets from the pirate Blackbeard's famous Queen Anne's Revenge in a laboratory in eastern North Carolina.

At least one of the canoes sailed the waters of Lake Phelps about 1,000 years before anybody ever heard of Blackbeard. The cypress canoes are undergoing an intense bout of conservation so that they can be reassembled and returned to Pettigrew for display.

There are at least 30 known canoes still resting in the shallow waters of Lake Phelps, left by Algonkian Indians and perhaps other tribes who moved in and out of this area near the Scuppernong River and the Great Dismal Swamp over centuries. The story of these two is interesting.

Intense wildfires in 1985-86 prompted firefighters to draft water from Lake Phelps, and the pair of canoes – one about 550 years old and the other about 1,600 years old – were left high and dry and each was in several pieces,



MOST OF PETTIGREW STATE PARK'S CANOES REMAIN UNDERWATER.

according to state parks education specialist Gene Peacock. Each is about 12 feet long. They were taken to a park building for assembly and display in a glass case. The best science of the time suggested coating them with a sugar-based solution, but it wasn't the best idea. Over time, as humidity levels fluctuated in the tiny building, the solution crystallized and drew even more insects than had already been eating at the canoes.

In 2011, they were taken to the Queen Anne's Revenge Lab near Greenville to be stabilized. That has involved keeping them in a room with humidity controlled at 50 percent and

periodically measuring and weighing each. On July 25, the canoes underwent the second of three planned inspections. The final one is scheduled for this winter. They'll then be reassembled into newly designed cases and placed in a renovated facility at the state park.

One canoe from Pettigrew State Park rests in the North Carolina Museum of History and one, which was recovered in two pieces, is shared between two regional museums. As for the canoes left in the water – which range up to 30 feet long – Peacock and park rangers monitor them at least twice a year to make sure they're not damaged or disturbed.

'PARK' IT

**WITH A STATE PARKS
SPECIALTY LICENSE TAG**



The Division of Motor Vehicles is accepting applications and payment for these special license plates. There is a \$30 fee in addition to regular license fees (\$60 for personalized plates). Additional fees support conservation through the Parks and Recreation and Natural Heritage trust funds.

**Information at www.ncparks.gov
or www.ncdot.org/dmv**

NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS

MONTHLY ATTENDANCE REPORT

JUNE, 2012

NC STATE PARK	June 2012	TOTAL YTD Jun-12	June 2011	TOTAL YTD Jun-11	% CHANGE (2012/2011) Jun YTD
Carolina Beach State Park	55,592	300,346	56,172	276,284	-1% 9%
Carvers Creek State Park	52	118	0	10	-100% 1,000%
Chimney Rock State Park	27,948	74,499	19,198	60,378	46% 23%
Cliffs of the Neuse State Park	24,002	90,576	22,573	83,459	6% 9%
Crowders Mountain State Park	30,850	166,120	25,724	198,364	20% -16%
Dismal Swamp State Park	6,021	38,978	8,652	45,364	-30% -14%
Elk Knob State Park	3,868	16,247	2,966	11,432	30% 42%
Eno River State Park including Occaneechee Mountain State Natural Area	47,939	259,033	56,327	255,665	-15% 1%
Falls Lake State Recreation Area	175,458	591,727	152,200	398,212	15% 49%
Fort Fisher State Recreation Area	138,455	393,246	145,411	384,150	-5% 2%
Fort Macon State Park	184,520	611,702	200,562	645,858	-8% -5%
Goose Creek State Park	48,274	205,848	32,060	124,914	51% 65%
Gorges State Park	12,734	46,444	9,414	34,439	35% 35%
Grandfather Mountain State Park	9,749	32,655	2,264	7,543	331% 333%
Hammocks Beach State Park	19,652	64,540	8,820	44,538	123% 45%
Haw River State Park	2,722	15,464	2,199	9,796	24% 58%
Hanging Rock State Park	56,035	216,579	63,864	235,854	-12% -8%
Jones Lake State Park	14,252	56,921	2,682	14,139	431% 303%
Jordan Lake State Recreation Area	192,454	609,136	129,502	374,046	49% 63%
Jockey's Ridge State Park	162,709	429,694	285,013	736,460	-43% -42%
Kerr Lake State Recreation Area	180,800	550,660	152,876	624,408	18% -12%
Lake James State Park	58,786	208,310	86,767	299,311	-32% -30%
Lake Norman State Park	67,552	271,389	65,166	250,620	4% 8%
Lake Waccamaw State Park	16,471	67,387	11,829	44,358	39% 52%
Lumber River State Park	6,508	27,753	6,184	35,008	5% -21%
Mayo River State Park	1,653	15,136	4,333	17,701	-62% -14%
Merchants Millpond State Park	25,297	167,667	26,873	161,546	-6% 4%
Medoc Mountain State Park	10,200	49,144	5,986	36,850	70% 33%
Mount Mitchell State Park	41,816	109,392	41,381	99,972	1% 9%
Morrison Mountain State Park	45,770	186,255	81,960	258,359	-44% -28%
New River State Park including Mount Jefferson State Natural Area	31,861	106,984	53,108	128,582	-40% -17%
Pettigrew State Park	6,689	33,494	8,246	36,563	-19% -8%
Pilot Mountain State Park	52,798	211,289	42,152	223,236	25% -5%
Raven Rock State Park	20,289	94,365	11,516	77,581	76% 22%
Singleary Lake State Park	2,676	10,969	4,410	12,150	-39% -10%
South Mountains State Park	24,475	101,842	21,488	95,866	14% 6%
Stone Mountain State Park	53,492	155,540	56,116	199,556	-5% -22%
Weymouth Woods-Sandhills Nature Preserve	4,977	28,389	5,048	30,049	-1% -6%
William B. Umstead State Park	199,735	809,655	88,998	456,640	124% 77%
SYSTEMWIDE TOTAL	2,065,131	7,425,493	2,000,040	7,029,261	3% 6%



Our Mission Remains...

to protect North Carolina's natural diversity;
to provide and promote outdoor recreation
opportunities throughout North Carolina;
to exemplify and encourage good stewardship
of North Carolina's natural resources for all
citizens and visitors.

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SAFETY ZONE

SAFETY MATTERS ON THE LADDERS

✓ Do not underestimate the danger of falling; falls are a leading cause of accidental injuries both on and off the job.

✓ To reach high objects, use a ladder or step stool - never a box or chair.

✓ Follow the 4-to-1 rule when using a straight ladder; place its base out at least 1/4 of its height.

✓ Always face the ladder when climbing and descending; carry loads in one hand keeping the other on the ladder.

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